

Clifton Springs,
Sept. 17, 1887.

My Dear May,

I was glad to get yours
of the 15th this morning, for I
had feared you were ill; but
I am pained to learn that
Mrs. May is so feeble. I trust
she will shortly recover her
strength, for I know ^{how} needful
it is to your comfort as well
her own.

I flatter myself that,
upon the whole, I am somewhat
better than I was a year ago;
and yet I am constrained to
confess myself a feeble old
man. I am hoping that the
best results of my summer
outing will appear after I get
back to the pavement, and

this hope, rests in part upon former experience. Mrs. Johnson is better than she was a short time ago, but far from strong.

We expect to go to Niagara Falls next Friday, to remain there over Sunday, and to reach home on the 27th inst. We have engaged temporary accommodations, which we hope to make permanent, at 33 East 22d St. It, as used to be said, three moves are as bad as one fire, we may claim your sympathy as if we had been burned out. The labor thus imposed falls heavily upon my dear wife, my state of health forbidding me any sort of bodily exercise other than very slow walking.

I cannot drive a nail or lift the lightest piece of furniture without panting for breath. though I can sit and read or write without producing any such effect. My wife ought not to do such work as is required to set our lanes and penates in order, and I must see that she has help.

There has been considerable talk about a second speech from me on early anti-slavery history; but most of those who heard my first are now gone, and unless I am closely pressed I think I shall not speak again. Nothing could be more gratifying, however, than the testimonials I have received on account of my address. But I feel that

~~that~~ the day of my public
speaking, save on some ve-
ry exceptional occasion, is past.

The news of Mr. Billard's
vindication reached us last ev-
ing in a letter from Fanny.
I felt like tossing my hat right
up into the empyrean! How
quickly the tide in his case has
turned. He seems to have
confounded all his enemies
and won hosts of new friends.
I am sure he will prove
himself worthy of any mea-
sure of success that he may
achieve. It is a comfort to
know that a clean-handed and
high-souled man like him is
rich. The world will be the better for
it.

You allude to the approaching Presidential struggle. It is the first allusion to politics, I think, for many years, in all our correspondence. I do not know how far my views agree with yours; but the Republican party is bad enough for me. If I ever leave it, it will not be to join the Democratic party, or to aid it in getting into power. As soon should I think of jumping into the ditch to clean my boots if they were soiled in travelling upon a macadamised road. It seems to me that the Republican Mugwumps stultified themselves when, after denouncing the Democratic party as seeking to crawl back into power through a conspiracy to obtain the spoils

of office, they turned in and helped to elect a Democratic President. They were told, and truly told, that to elect Cleveland would be to elect the Democratic party, and now they are finding it out. Cleveland paid them for their support by promises which he has only so far fulfilled as he was obliged to do in order to save himself from the charge of open treachery. He has done a few things to please them and to get them openly committed to his fortunes, but ~~the~~ general drift of his administration has been toward securing the spoils for his party.

In other words he has played a double part, ridden two horses; and now the Mugwumps have become so demoralized by their praises of him that they are actually saying, in substance, "Oh, he is a Democrat, and we could not reasonably expect him to abide by ^{the} ~~his~~ promises he made to us for our votes.

It seems to me that men who can shape their mouths to the utterance of such apologies are not the ones to criticize the Republican party for its shortcomings. In other words, the Mugwump charitableness for Cleveland is quite as bad as that of the Republicans for Blaine. Blaine is no favorite

of mine. I do not think him a statesman of highest rank, but hold him vulnerable in many respects. But I believe that, with the Republican party behind him he would have given us a poorer Administration than Cleveland has. If the persistent abuse of the Mugwumps forces him on the party again (as I hope it will not), I do not say I shall vote for him; but certainly I shall not in any case vote for Cleveland. I hope I may find myself in agreement with you in all this, but at any rate such is my own position.

Ms. B. 1. 6 v. 12 p. 16

Mr. Johnson and Helen send remembrances to you and Mrs. May, in which I join.

Yours, always,
Oliver Johnson